

Appln. No. 09/811,724  
Response dated February 7, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of October 11, 2005

**Amendments to the Claims:**

Please cancel claims 1, 3, 7-11, 15, 18 and 21, and amend claims 4 and 5 as follows. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-3 (Cancelled).

Claim 4 (Currently Amended). [[The]] An advertisement distribution system which receives advertisement contents from at least one advertisement provider through a communications network, and provides at least one advertisement user with the received advertisement contents through the communication network, said system comprising:

an advertising information storage unit which stores advertisement contents received from the at least one advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider information for controlling provision of an advertisement and corresponding to the received advertisement contents;

Appln. No. 09/811,724  
Response dated February 7, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of October 11, 2005

an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores  
advertisement usage information for specifying a desired  
15 advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;  
an advertisement extraction unit which extracts  
advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider  
information in association with the stored advertisement usage  
information; and  
20 a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement  
contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the  
at least one advertisement user having requested the  
advertisement contents,  
wherein the advertisement provider information includes an  
25 advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the  
at least one advertisement provider for predetermined  
advertisement contents;  
the advertisement user information includes an advertisement  
specification condition which is to be specified by the at least  
30 one advertisement user;  
the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement  
providing condition conforming to the input advertisement  
specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents  
corresponding to the advertisement provider information including  
35 the searched advertisement providing condition;

Appln. No. 09/811,724  
Response dated February 7, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of October 11, 2005

40 said advertisement extraction unit includes an advertisement selection unit which selects, when more than a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition are retrieved, a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information included in the retrieved items of advertisement provider information; and

45 said advertisement selection unit generates, when more than a predetermined number of items of the advertisement provider information are retrieved, a predetermined number of random numbers which corresponds to the number of the retrieved items of advertisement provider information, and selects a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information corresponding to the generated random numbers.

5 Claim 5 (Currently Amended). [[The]] An advertisement distribution system which receives advertisement contents from at least one advertisement provider through a communications network, and provides at least one advertisement user with the received advertisement contents through the communications network, said system comprising:

an advertisement information storage unit which stores advertisement contents received from the at least one

Appln. No. 09/611,724  
Response dated February 7, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of October 11, 2005

advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider  
10 information for controlling provision of an advertisement and  
corresponding to the received advertisement contents;  
an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores  
advertisement usage information for specifying a desired  
advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;  
15 an advertisement extraction unit which extracts  
advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider  
information in association with the stored advertisement usage  
information; and  
a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement  
20 contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the  
at least one advertisement user having requested the  
advertisement contents,  
wherein the advertisement provider information includes an  
advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the  
25 at least one advertisement provider for predetermined  
advertisement contents;  
the advertisement user information includes an advertisement  
specification condition which is to be specified by the at least  
one advertisement user;  
30 the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement  
providing condition conforming to the input advertisement

Appln. No. 09/811,724  
Response dated February 7, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of October 11, 2005

specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents corresponding to the advertisement provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition; and

35        said advertisement extraction unit includes a changing unit, which changes an item parameter included in the advertisement specification condition when a number of items of advertisement provider information including the advertisement providing condition does not reach a predetermined number, so as to search 40        the advertisement providing condition conforming to the changed item parameter included in the advertisement specification condition.

Claim 6 (Original). The advertisement distribution system according to claim 5, wherein said changing unit repeatedly changes a corresponding item parameter included in the advertisement specification condition, until the number of items 5        of advertisement provider information extracted by said advertisement extraction unit reaches the predetermined number.

Claims 7-11 (Cancelled).

Claim 12 (Previously Presented). A method for receiving advertising contents sent from an advertisement provider using an

Appln. No. 09/611,724  
Response dated February 7, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of October 11, 2005

advertisement provider terminal through a communications network,  
and sending the received advertisement contents to at least one  
5 advertisement user from an advertisement server, said method  
comprising the steps of:

10 storing the advertisement contents sent from the  
advertisement provider using the advertisement provider terminal  
and advertisement attribute information in association with each  
other;

storing advertisement user information sent from the at  
least one advertisement user using the sent advertisement  
contents;

15 retrieving advertisement attribute information conforming to  
the stored advertisement user information, and extracting  
advertisement contents corresponding to the retrieved  
advertisement attribute information;

sending the extracted advertisement contents to the at least  
one advertisement user;

20 receiving predetermined advertisement contents sent from  
said advertisement server to the at least one advertisement user  
and advertisement attribute information corresponding to the  
predetermined advertisement contents, and storing the received  
advertisement contents and the advertisement attribute  
25 information sequentially in received order;

Appln. No. 09/811,724  
Response dated February 7, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of October 11, 2005

outputting and specifying one of the advertisement contents included in the stored advertisement contents, when using an advertisement;

outputting the advertisement contents specified by said

30 outputting step;

updating and retaining, every time the advertisement content is output by said outputting step, advertisement-usage-context management information corresponding to the advertisement content;

35 sending the advertisement-usage-context management information retained by said updating and retaining step to said advertisement server at predetermined intervals;

obtaining a number of output advertisement contents included in the advertisement-usage-context management information sent to 40 said advertisement server from said at least one advertisement user in said sending step;

determining whether the obtained number of output advertisement contents exceeds a maximum number of to-be-provided advertisement included in the stored advertisement attribute 45 information; and

when it is determined that the obtained number of output advertisement contents has exceeded the maximum number of to-be-provided advertisements, removing the advertisement content

Appln. No. 09/811,724  
Response dated February 7, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of October 11, 2005

from target advertisement contents to be extracted by said  
50 extracting step.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented). The method according to  
claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

calculating an amount of money which is charged for  
advertisement charges toward the advertisement provider, based on  
5 the obtained number of output advertisement contents which is  
obtained by said calculating step; and

issuing a bill representing the amount of money which is  
calculated by said calculating step, to said advertisement  
provider.

Claim 14 (Original). The method according to claim 12,  
further comprising the steps of:

calculating a payment amount to be paid to the advertisement  
user, based on the obtained number of output advertisement  
5 contents obtained by said obtaining step; and

issuing a payment statement representing the payment amount  
to be paid which is calculated by said calculating step.

Claim 15 (Cancelled).

Appln. No. 09/811,724  
Response dated February 7, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of October 11, 2005

Claim 16 (Previously Presented). A computer readable recording medium which records a program for controlling a computer function as:

an advertisement information storage unit which stores  
5 advertisement contents received from the at least one advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider information for controlling provision of an advertisement and corresponding to the received advertisement contents;

10 an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores advertisement usage information for specifying a desired advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;

15 an advertisement extraction unit which extracts advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider information in association with the stored advertisement usage information; and

a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the at least one advertisement user having requested the advertisement contents,

20 wherein the advertisement provider information includes an advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the

Appln. No. 09/811,724  
Response dated February 7, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of October 11, 2005

at least one advertisement provider for predetermined advertisement contents;

25 the advertisement-user information includes an advertisement-specification condition which is to be specified by the at least one advertisement user;

the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement providing condition conforming to the input advertisement-specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents 30 corresponding to the advertisement provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition;

35 said advertisement extraction unit includes an advertisement selection unit which selects, when more than a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition are retrieved, a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information included in the retrieved items of advertisement provider information; and

40 said advertisement selection unit generates, when more than a predetermined number of items of the advertisement provider information are retrieved, a predetermined number of random numbers which corresponds to the number of the retrieved items of advertisement provider information, and selects a predetermined

Appln. No. 09/811,724  
Response dated February 7, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of October 11, 2005

number of items of advertisement provider information  
45 corresponding to the generated random numbers.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented). A computer readable recording medium which records a program for controlling a computer function as:

an advertisement information storage unit which stores  
5 advertisement contents received from the at least one advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider information for controlling provision of an advertisement and corresponding to the received advertisement contents;

10 an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores advertisement usage information for specifying a desired advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;

15 an advertisement extraction unit which extracts advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider information in association with the stored advertisement usage information; and

20 a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the at least one advertisement user having requested the advertisement contents,

Appln. No. 09/811,724  
Response dated February 7, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of October 11, 2005

wherein the advertisement provider information includes an advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the at least one advertisement provider for predetermined advertisement contents;

25 the advertisement-user information includes an advertisement-specification condition which is to be specified by the at least one advertisement user;

the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement providing condition conforming to the input advertisement-specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents corresponding to the advertisement provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition; and

30 said advertisement extraction unit includes a changing unit, which changes an item parameter included in the advertisement specification condition when a number of items of advertisement provider information including the advertisement providing condition does not reach a predetermined number, so as to search the advertisement providing condition conforming to the changed item parameter included in the advertisement specification condition.

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Claim 18 (Cancelled).

Appln. No. 09/811,724  
Response dated February 7, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of October 11, 2005

Claim 19 (Previously Presented). A program data signal embodied in a carrierwave for controlling a computer function as:

an advertising information storage unit which stores advertisement contents received from the at least one advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider information for controlling provision of an advertisement and corresponding to the received advertisement contents;

an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores advertisement usage information for specifying a desired advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;

an advertisement extraction unit which extracts advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider information in association with the stored advertisement usage information; and

a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the at least one advertisement user having requested the advertisement contents,

wherein the advertisement provider information includes an advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the at least one advertisement provider for predetermined advertisement contents;

Appln. No. 09/811,724  
Response dated February 7, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of October 11, 2005

the advertisement-user information includes an  
advertisement-specification condition which is to be specified by  
25 the at least one advertisement user;

the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement  
providing condition conforming to the input  
advertisement-specification condition, and retrieves  
advertisement contents corresponding to the advertisement  
30 provider information including the searched advertisement  
providing condition;

said advertisement extraction unit includes an advertisement  
selection unit which selects, when more than a predetermined  
number of items of advertisement provider information including  
35 the searched advertisement providing condition are retrieved, a  
predetermined number of items of advertisement provider  
information included in the retrieved items of advertisement  
provider information; and

said advertisement selection unit generates, when more than  
40 a predetermined number of items of the advertisement provider  
information are retrieved, a predetermined number of random  
numbers which corresponds to the number of the retrieved items of  
advertisement provider information, and selects a predetermined  
number of items of advertisement provider information  
45 corresponding to the generated random numbers.

Appln. No. 09/811,724  
Response dated February 7, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of October 11, 2005

Claim 20 (Previously Presented). A program data signal embodied in a carrierwave for controlling a computer function as:  
an advertisement information storage unit which stores advertisement contents received from the at least one advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider information for controlling provision of an advertisement and corresponding to the received advertisement contents;  
an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores advertisement usage information for specifying a desired advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;  
an advertisement extraction unit which extracts advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider information in association with the stored advertisement usage information; and  
a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the at least one advertisement user having requested the advertisement contents,  
wherein the advertisement provider information includes an advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the

Appln. No. 09/811,724  
Response dated February 7, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of October 11, 2005

at least one advertisement provider for predetermined  
advertisement contents;

25 the advertisement-user information includes an  
advertisement-specification condition which is to be specified by  
the at least one advertisement user;

the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement  
providing condition conforming to the input  
advertisement-specification condition, and retrieves  
30 advertisement contents corresponding to the advertisement  
provider information including the searched advertisement  
providing condition; and

said advertisement extraction unit includes a changing unit,  
which changes an item parameter included in the advertisement  
specification condition when a number of items of advertisement  
35 provider information including the advertisement providing  
condition does not reach a predetermined number, so as to search  
the advertisement providing condition conforming to the changed  
item parameter included in the advertisement specification  
item parameter included in the advertisement specification  
40 condition.

Claim 21 (Cancelled).